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C O N F I D E N T I A L LUANDA 000103

SIPDIS

AFRICOM FOR POLAD JERRY LANIER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/13/2019

TAGS: PARM PTER AO

SUBJECT: ANGOLA: AWASH IN ANTIQUATED AND ILL-SECURED MANPADS

Classified By: Ambassador Dan Mozena for Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Zeca Agostinho, Deputy Country Representative for UK-based HALO Trust, an NGO that specializes in demining and destruction of excess munitions, told Post that Angola's excess MANPADS (man-portable anti-aircraft defense systems) are dangerously stored and poorly inventoried. According to Agostinho, the GRA has not disclosed the total number of MANPADS in storage. Given limited access by the Angolan military (FAA) to MANPADS storage sites in Malange, Luanda and Lubango, Agostinho saw at least three hundred MANPADS this past year, ranging from obsolete SAM-7 models to SAM-14s. HALO hopes USG pressure will encourage the GRA to take advantage of HALO's Weapons and Ammunition Destruction (WAD) program to address the safety and security risks posed by Angola's MANPADS stockpile. End Summary

¶2. (C) During a recent meeting with the DCM, Zeca Agostinho explained that during a January 2007 tour of MANPADS storage sites in Malange, FAA leadership had invited HALO to assist in the destruction of Angola's expired MANPADS caches. However, two months later, the FAA notified HALO that President dos Santos had declared the FAA's MANPADS essential to the security of the country and off limits to HALO workers. The FAA explained to Agostinho that the president wanted to keep the MANPADs out of the wrong hands by storing them in secure facilities rather than destroying them.

¶3. (C) Agostinho stated that over the past year he has seen 50 MANPADS in Malange, 200 in Luanda, and 50 in Lubango. He added that he has received reports of MANPADS being stored in Cabinda and elsewhere. HALO made some progress gaining access to MANPADS, despite the moratorium on their destruction. HALO confirmed the destruction of one SAM-7 in February 2008 that was submitted by the national police. In July 2008, police in Lubango submitted another SAM-7 for destruction, as well as a launching tube and grip stock.

¶4. (C) Although pleased with the destruction of two MANPADS in 2008, Agostinho expressed frustration with the Angolan government over its reluctance to store MANPADS properly and to dispose of obsolete MANPADS. To his knowledge only the US and British government are engaging the GRA on this issue. To date, HALO has never asked for USG assistance in working with the GRA. During this meeting, however, Agostinho said HALO would appreciate a more vocal approach by the USG with the GRA, adding that he does not believe the GRA will change its policy on MANPADS security and destruction without outside pressure.

¶5. (C) Comment: The poor state of many of the GRA's MANPADS and the lack of security at storage facilities are significant issues of concern for Angola ... and for us. Post will engage the Angolans on the need to destroy excess, poorly maintained and stored munitions, including MANPADS, to diminish the risk of a disastrous ammunition dump explosion, such as the deadly one in Maputo a few years ago. MANPADS

not destroyed will need to be stored securely. Successful completion of negotiations of the proposed military-to-military MOU will improve our chances for meaningful cooperation on this sensitive issue. End Comment
MOZENA